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Muscle Shoals Baptist Association

v. 1. 1850

v. 2. 1854

v. 3. 1855

v. 4. 1858

v. 5. 1859

v. 6. 1861

v. 7. 1867

v. 8. 1871

v. 9. 1885

v. 10. 1887

v. 11. 1888

v. 12. 1891

v. 13. 1892

v. 14. 1893

v. 15. 1895

v. 16. 1896

v. 17. 1897

v. 18. 1898

v. 19. 1899

v. 20. 1900

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 42d ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE
MUSCLE SHOALS
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,
HELD WITH THE

RUSSEL VALLEY CHURCH, FRANKLIN CO., ALA.,

October 4th, 5th, and 6th, 1861.

OFFICERS.

REV. JACKSON GUNN, Moderator.

REV. JOS. SHACKELFORD, Clerk.

ISAAC N. OWEN, Treasurer.

NASHVILLE, TENN :
SOUTH WESTERN PUBLISHING HOUSE.
GRAVES, MARKS & CO.
1861.

OFFICERS.

Rev. JACKSON GUNN, Moderator.

Rev. JOSEPHUS SHACKELFORD, Clerk,

ISAAC N. OWEN, Treasurer.

EXECUTIVE BOARD.

CHARLES GIBSON, President.

Z. F. FREEMAN, Secretary.

ISAAC N. OWEN,

W. A. GILBERT,

W. W. PEERSON,

JOHN Y. SHOEMAKER,

JOSEPH C. ORR,

EDWARD WISE,

L. D. MASSENGALE,

Located at Moulton..

PROCEEDINGS.

Friday Morning, Oct. 4, 1861.

The delegates composing the Forty-Second Annual Session of the Muscle Shoals Baptist Association, convened with the Russel Valley Church, Franklin co., Ala., Friday morning, Oct. 4th, 1861. Rev. M. Finney preached the Introductory sermon. Text: Phil. 2, xii, xiii. After which, the Association adjourned for one hour.

Friday afternoon.

The Association met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by the Moderator. The former Moderator and Clerk took their seats, and the Association proceeded to business, as follows:

The letters from the churches were read, and the names of delegates enrolled. At the same time, the Association proceeded to the election of Moderator and Clerk; which resulted in the choice of Rev. J. Gunn as Moderator, and Rev. Jos. Shackelford Clerk.

The Moderator appointed a Committee consisting of Brn. J. B. Speak, A. H. Stanley and M. Sledge, to arrange the order of business for the Association. The Committee reported, recommending the Association to pursue the order as laid down in the Minutes of last year.

The report was adopted.

The Moderator then appointed a Committee on Devotional exercises, consisting of Brn. W. W. Peerson, Wm. Moss, John Drake, J. F. Belue, S. Peerson and A. H. Stanley.

PETITIONARY LETTERS.

A letter was received from Cedar Creek Baptist Church, Morgan county, Ala., petitioning for membership into our body, but as no delegates were present, the subject of its reception was postponed until Saturday.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM SISTER ASSOCIATIONS.

Bro. J. J. Ramsey presented a package of Minutes of the Big Bear Creek Association and was received as a Messenger from that Association. Rev. W. R. Alexander and Bro. J. D. Kee were also received as Messengers from that body on Saturday.

VISITING BRETHREN.

On motion, Rev. H. B. Slater, of Tusculumbia was invited to take a seat with us.

COMMITTEES.

The Moderator appointed the following Committees:

On Sabbath Schools—Rev. M. Finney, G. W. Harget, John W. Townsend.

On Documents—W. W. Pearson, E. Ellett, A. H. Stanley.

On Foreign Missions—Rev. Thomas Nicholson, A. H. Stanley, T. Jones.

On State of Religion—Rev. J. C. Roberts, J. Herring, Rev. A. W. Nunn.

On Education—Z. F. Freeman, J. B. Speak, J. F. Belue.

On Finance—C. Gibson, J. B. Speak, M. Sledge.

On Domestic Missions—Rev. M. A. Verser, Wm. Moss, Rev. Wm. Spain.

On Temperance—E. Ellet, J. Herring, Isham Milam.

CORRESPONDENCE TO OTHER ASSOCIATIONS

Appointed delegates to General Association of Middle Tennessee and North Alabama, viz: Rev. J. Gunn, J. N. Owen, Rev. M. A. Verser, Rev. Jos. Shackelford, Z. F. Freeman, Rev. Wm. Spain, C. Gibson, E. Windes, Rev. Thos. Nicholson, M. Sledge.

Liberty Association—Rev. J. Shackelford, Z. F. Freeman.

Big Bear Creek Association—John W. Townsend, Rev. T. S. Carson, Rev. Thomas Nicholson, W. W. Pearson.

Tennessee River Association—Rev. M. A. Verser.

Warrior River Association—Rev. M. A. Verser, A. W. Nunn.

Appointed a Committee to ascertain the times and places of holding the next Union meetings, consisting of Rev. M. Finney, Isham Milam and J. Herring.

The following resolution was offered by Bro. C. Gibson and unanimously adopted:

Owing to the condition of our once happy and prosperous, but now distracted country,

Resolved, That this Association suspend its regular business each day at 11 o'clock, during its present session, and spend at least one half hour or more in special prayer for our country.

The resolution of Bro. Finney, offered at the last session of the Association, instructing "The Committee appointed to revise the Constitution, Abstract of Principles, and Rules of Decorum, to amend the Constitution of this body, so that the Executive Board may be members of the Association by virtue of their office" was taken up by motion of Bro. Finney, and after some discussion, the resolution was voted down.

Upon motion the Constitution and Rules of Decorum were read by the Clerk.

Committee on Devotional exercises reported that Bro. Nicholson was appointed to preach at 11 o'clock to-morrow, at the stand.

On motion of Bro. Shackelford, a Committee was appointed to take into consideration the state of our country and report, consisting of Bros. Shackelford, Z. F. Freeman, M. Finney, J. B. Speak, and John W. Townsend.

On motion the Association adjourned to meet at 8½ o'clock Saturday morning. Prayer by Rev. A. W. Nunn.

Saturday morning, 8½ o'clock.

The Association met pursuant to adjournment.

Prayer by T. S. Carson.

The Minutes of the preceding day were read and the roll called.

Bro. Finney offered the following resolution, which was adopted:

Resolved, That any Church that fails to represent herself either by letter or delegate, for two years in succession, shall not be noticed in the Minutes, nor furnished with Minutes.

REPORT OF DOMESTIC MISSIONS.

The Committee on Domestic Missions made the following report which was received and adopted:

The Committee on Domestic Missions beg leave to submit the following report: Owing to the distracted condition of our country, and considering the Monetary crisis that is now on us, we are at a loss to devise any plan that can be successfully carried out. There are many Churches within the bounds of the Association, destitute of Ministerial aid, many of which have been built up by our Missionary system, and are now in a prosperous condition, the most of which, in all probability will dissolve, if the Association ceases to aid them. Indeed "the harvest is great, but the laborers are few." If the Association cannot carry out the plan adopted for the last two years, we recommend that an Executive Board be appointed as usual, to make such contracts with the Missionaries as they, in their wisdom, may think the wants of the Churches demand and the condition of the country will justify.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

M. A. VERSER, Chairman.

The following resolution was offered by Bro. Shackelford and adopted:

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this Association, that the cause of our Saviour demands at this particular time, our earnest efforts and prayers, and that instead of giving up our Missionary enterprises, we should make more exertions and greater

sacrifices to sustain them, and trust to the promise of our Heavenly Father, "That we shall reap if we faint not."

REPORT OF SABBATH SCHOOLS.

The Committee on Sabbath Schools made the following report which was received and adopted:

We your Committee, beg leave to report: We listened with care and attention, when the letters from the various Churches of the Association were read, to hear what was going on among the Churches in the way of Sabbath Schools, but to our utter astonishment, but one that we recollect, said anything about the institution. As far as we have been able to learn, a declension has taken place from some cause unknown to us. Two causes we will venture to surmise. One is, the calamity which has befallen our once happy country, and the other though little, not the least, is the difference of opinion with regard to what is called the Union book, and the one published by Graves, Marks & Co. If we are correct in our surmises, this should not be so. If we cannot get Male Teachers, there are plenty of good Mothers in the Churches, who can teach, as well perhaps and possibly better than most men. As to books, we would urge the Churches to secure the organization of a Sabbath School in each Church, after which let the Fathers and Mothers of the Children, choose the books for the School. Too much importance cannot be attached to a Sabbath School. In it, the little boys and girls are taught good behaviour and how and what it is to respect the worship of God. There, the first principles of life are formed, which will govern the whole life and character of the little boys and girls of every community. We would advise that the Churches mention in their letters to the next Association, whether they have a Sabbath School or not, also the number of children in attendance, the number of Teachers, and what kind of books they use and how many, &c. We would also advise the Association, that our Missionaries be instructed to spend a part of their time in organizing Sabbath Schools in the Churches.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

MIKE FINNEY, Chairman.

REPORT OF BAPTIST FEMALE INSTITUTE.

The report of the President of the Board of Trustees of the Baptist Female Institute, at Moulton, was read, received and adopted.

The Trustees of the Baptist Female Institute at Moulton, Ala., Most respectfully submit the following as their Tenth Annual Report: Since the last Annual Report of the Trustees bearing date, the 6th day of October, 1860, the Institute School has remained under the charge of the same Faculty, who then

conducted it, and during this period its prosperity, in the number of its scholars, the success in literary and scientific progress, in health and good order, has been maintained without material abatement from its early promise of eminent usefulness. The Library, the valuable scientific apparatus, the building, the furniture and fixtures of the corporation remain in good order, as at our last report. At the last meeting of your venerable Body at Moulton, the indebtedness, under which the Institute then labored, was most generously assumed by its friends, and the Institution declared out of debt, as will be seen in the Minutes of the Association for 1860, at pages 13, 14, 15 and 16. These assumptions, notwithstanding the difficulties of the times, have thus far been most honorably met, and the Board have no reason to believe that any of them will fail in the end. The following persons constitute the present Board of Trustees, viz: Thomas M. Peters, President; David Lynch, Secretary; Richard O. Picket, Treasurer; and John Y. Shoemaker, appointed in 1859; Washington A. Gilbert and Michael W. Mayes, appointed in 1858; and William McKelvy, John C. Orr, Macklin Sledge, James B. Speak, Benjamin F. Walker, Levi F. Warren and Michael West, appointed in 1860. Of these, the terms of Mr. Gilbert, Mr. Mayes and Mr. B. F. Walker, who was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Mr. James Streeter appointed in 1858, are now terminated by the limitation of their appointments, as prescribed by the Act of Incorporation.

All of which is most respectfully submitted,

THOMAS M. PETERS,

President of the Board of Trustees.

MOULTON, ALA. Oct. 5th, 1861.

The following members of the Board of Trustees were appointed by the Associations: W. A. Gilbert, C. Gibson and B. F. Walker.

UNION MEETINGS.

The Committee appointed to ascertain the times and places of holding the Union Meetings, reported as follows:

1st District.—Friday before the third Sabbath in May, 1862, at Evening Shade Church. M. Finney to preach the Introductory sermon.

2nd District.—Friday before the fifth Sabbath in ~~June~~ 1862, at Town Creek Church. Thomas Nicholson to preach the Introductory sermon.

3d District.—Friday before the fifth Sabbath in ~~June~~ 1862, at Mt. Zion Church, in Morgan county. L. Gunn to preach the Introductory sermon.

The subject of appointing the place of meeting for the next Association, was taken up. The Association agreed to meet

with Hopewell Church, Morgan county, Ala. The time having arrived for Devotional exercises, the business of the Association was suspended, and one half hour was spent in singing and prayer, Bro. J. Shackelford leading the exercises, and prayer by Bro. Verser and Roberts. Rev. J. Shackelford was appointed to preach the Introductory sermon, and Rev. Thomas Nicholson Alternate. Rev. J. C. Roberts was appointed to write a circular letter to be read at the next session of the Association.

STATE OF RELIGION.

The Committee on the state of Religion, offered the following report which was received and adopted: Your Committee on the state of Religion, beg leave to submit the following report: We have not had an opportunity of examining all the letters of the Churches, yet our recollection is that nothing out of the usual order of things religiously, has occurred. Some Churches have been built up, while others complain of coldness. Upon the whole, in view of the sad state of our country, we feel that we have much to call forth our deepest gratitude to God, that it is as well with us, as it is. All of which is respectfully submitted.

J. C. ROBERTS, Chairman.

Bro. M. A. Verser made his report, which was received and referred to the Executive Committee.

Bro. W. W. Willhite also made a report of his Missionary labors, which was disposed of as above.

On motion ajourned for one hour.

Saturday Afternoon.

The Association convened pursuant to adjournment.

Prayer by Bro. Slater.

Committee on Devotional exercises reported that Bro. Verser was appointed to preach this evening at the Stand.

EDUCATION.

The Committee on Education made the following report, which was received and adopted:

The Committee on Education ask leave to submit the following report: The fostering influence which religious bodies ought to exert over institutions of Learning, has recently become more generally admitted than in years long since gone by. Yet there are some even at this day, who oppose what they term "denominational schools." They seem to have imbibed the incorrect idea that there is some natural discrepancy, some irreconcilable hostility between religion and learning. It is one of the enigmas of Roman Catholicism that "ignorance is the mother of devotion;" and some who reprobate the doctrines of Romanism have nevertheless yielded assent to the notion, that learning would, if generally diffused throughout the

community, prove detrimental to the interests of piety. But a careful investigation of the subject will evince that learning and religion are natural allies; and that it is the true interest of the friends of each to cultivate a good understanding between them, and to make them mutually subservient to each other's advantage. But perhaps the question may be asked, "What benefit has learning conferred upon Religion?" The answer is apparent. Learning has recorded the documents of religion. It has gathered up the various books composing the Old and New Testaments and united them in one great "Book of Books"—the Bible. If it had contributed no other service than this to the cause of Christianity, the friends of the latter ought gratefully to acknowledge the benefit. For if the revelations of God's will to man had not been thus recorded in permanent form, they would have been scattered, like the leaves of the Sybil, to the winds of heaven, and so have benefitted only a single generation, the generation to which they were delivered. But now we have in the written Scriptures a fixed, sufficient, and authoritative rule of faith and practice, and now also, though prophecy has ceased,—though, God no longer answers by Urin and Thummim,—we have in the records of inspiration, a lively oracle, ever accessible, whose responses are infallible, and equally applicable to all times and all circumstances. Now, too, we are able to behold the visions of the ancient seers; to look out upon the desolations of the deluge, and the conflagration of Sodom; to witness the miracles of Moses and Elijah, of Christ and His Apostles; to hear the predictions of the ancient Prophets, of Isaiah, and Daniel and John;—to chant to the harp of David the anthems of the sweet singer of Israel; to listen to the Proverbs of Solomon, and the sermons of the greater than Solomon, who "spake as never man spake;" to be delighted with the history of Jesus and the early progress of Christianity; to be edified with the doctrines of the Gospel in the inspired epistles; and to be persuaded by the appeals and the reasonings of the Apostle of the Gentiles. If Learning has recorded the documents of Religion, it has also preserved them pure, notwithstanding the efforts that have been made from time to time to add apocryphal books, both to the Old and New Testaments. The sacred oracles were of necessity committed to human keeping, and everything on which man puts his finger, he defiles. Everything in his hands is liable to deterioration. How then was it to be known whether the selection of the genuine from the spurious was fairly and honestly made? The answer to this question is also apparent. The Ithuriel spear of knowledge alone could have detected error, had it been present, and it is the concurrent testimony of learned critics who have spent their lives in such investigations, that the selections have been made with the greatest integrity and caution. Learning

has also translated the documents of Religion into the various languages of mankind. Without such translation the revelation of Heaven would have been confined to one nation. Religion would now be a dumb oracle to all the world, or she would speak only in an unknown tongue;—and there would be “no man able to take the book, or to loose the seals thereof, and read the book.” Thus without learning to record, preserve and translate, the world to-day would be destitute of the Bible, and the man who advocates the doctrine, that learning is incompatible with religion, would have *no book* to quote a text from to sustain his notion, or upon which to display his ignorance. Learning from every department of its storehouse, furnishes auxiliaries to Religion. Besides celebrating the progress and the achievements of Christianity, her historical records have on the one hand corroborated the most important facts and truths of the Bible, and on the other hand refuted the principal objections of infidelity. Infidelity attempted to press Astronomy into its service, but later discoveries in that sublime science not only repelled the attempt, but greatly enhanced the glory of Christianity by disclosing Myriads of worlds whose inhabitants may be and probably will be, interested directly or indirectly in the mediation of Jesus Christ. Infidelity thus vanquished in the heavens endeavored to erect a geological battery against the chronology of the Scriptures. But here again, Learning in her most profound researches has aided Religion by evincing a perfect harmony between the testimony of Moses and that of the most eminent Geologists. Nor is this all. The study of Antiquities has elucidated a thousand passages of Scripture rendered obscure by allusions to the manners and customs of the ancients. Logic and Metaphysics have contributed greatly to the comprehension of Divine truth and to its orderly presentation to the understanding; while Rhetoric and Oratory lend their efficient aid to impress it on the heart and conscience. Is it not then important that the Churches of Christ should cultivate with assiduous care that which they find to be so excellent and indispensable an auxiliary? Ought not we as a people and as an Association to labor with greater zeal and energy to dispense the blessings of Education widely throughout our bounds? Ought not Learning sanctified by our holy religion to command our love, our efforts, and our prayers?

Brethren, shall the schools, we as a denomination, have undertaken to support, be left to languish, while your daughters and sons are sent to schools in which you have no interest, and where the chief accomplishments acquired are, a fondness for the mazes of folly and fashion, and for the glitter of unreal pleasure which pall upon the palate, or like Dead Sea apples, turn to ashes on the lips. Friends of Education in the Muscle Shoals Association stand pledged to the community to do much

for the cause of Learning. Will you fulfill that just expectation?
Z. F. FREEMAN, Chairman.

TEMPERANCE.

The Committee on Temperance reported as follows, which was received and adopted:

We your Committee on Temperance beg leave to report:

Temperance as far as intoxicating liquors are concerned, is of importance to every Baptist. For if the Baptist Churches have suffered from one particular sin more than another, it is intemperance. Not a Church in our bounds, but what has had more or less trouble from members drinking intoxicating drinks. We would advise the Churches as soon as possible to get rid of this by exclusion—not to favor it under the garb of acknowledgment and pledges made to be broken. We are happy to know that many of the Churches are acting nobly in this matter, and we think the day has now come, when Baptists repudiate this thought of drunkenness as much as any other Religious body. For which we are glad. All of which is respectfully submitted.

E. ELLET, Chairman.

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The Committee on Foreign Missions made the following report, which was received and adopted:

The subject of Foreign Missions is becoming fearfully neglected. We have relaxed our zeal. From the history of our declension, in this benevolent department of the Gospel, it is evident that we are forgetting the nature of God's Truth, and our former enthusiasm as "Missionary Baptists." One of the first ideas of religion is progressive action. If we wish to realize the presence of God's good Spirit, we must "Arise and be doing." The duty of communicating our happy Christian feelings to others, cannot be dissociated not only from the dictates of human nature and sympathy, but also from the teaching of the Great Teacher. Had He not learned to communicate His holy feelings to us, we would have been without the enjoyment of religion to this day. His was a life of active benevolence. The great rule of His teaching is to "*do good to all men.*" The sphere of our labor embraces every quarter of the globe where men are found.—"*The field is the world.*" Could we but realize the sentiment we are an ungrateful people. The Gospel came *here* from the *East*, from Judea, Syria and the neighboring nations. These nations, which once enjoyed the presence and preaching of Christ and His apostles, are now the seats, for the most part, of Heathenism. How can we be so ungrateful as not to send the peace of religion to them, who were once so generous and good as to send it to us! Let us endeavor, Dear Brethren, to renew our energy in this glorious

entprise. O let us burn with pious love towards the poor benighted heathen, and have them rejoice in hope of the glory of God as we do. Respectfully submitted.

THOMAS NICHOLSON, Chairman.

DOCUMENTS.

The Committee on Documents made their report, which was received and adopted as follows:

We find nothing in the various letters worthy of action. The resolution of Bro. Nicholson, proposing to lift a collection on Sabbath, for the purpose of procuring Testaments and tracts for our Soldiers, having been referred to us, we feel that we cannot urge upon this body too strenuously the importance of supplying our Soldiers with every means available, to guard them against temptations, and direct their minds to Christ. Respectfully submitted.

W. W. PEERSON, Chairman.

The Petitionary letter of Cedar Creek Church was taken up, and on motion of Bro. Roberts, the letter of the Church was received and the Clerk instructed to send Ministers to Loid-*Said* Church.

Bro. Shackelford stated, that Bro. J. N. Owen, requested him to state to the Association, that he held in his hands \$250; the bequest of Bro. F. C. Owens, deceased, and he wished the Association to take possession of it or direct what should be done with it. The Association directed that Bro. J. N. Owen, as Treasurer of the Association, loan out the money and take such security as he may think will make it perfectly safe, requiring the interest to be paid annually.

EXECUTIVE BOARD.

The report of the Executive Board was received and adopted as follows:

Dear Brethren: The Executive Board ask leave to present the annual report of their proceedings.

The present has been a gloomy and disastrous year for Missionary operations. The political storm, whose mutterings were already heard in the distance at the time of our Associational meeting at Moulton, filling the minds of all with apprehension and foreboding, has at length burst upon us in all the desolating fury of a stupendous civil war. The entire thought, nerve, and energy of the country has become absorbed in the issue of free national existence, or subjugation and serfdom. Thousands of our fellow-citizens stepped promptly into the ranks, ready at the call of patriotism, to peril fortune and life in the defence of firesides and loved ones. Thousands more are engaged at home with ceaseless activity and munificent donations, in sustaining those who are in the field, and supplying the necessities of those families who have been left behind. It

estimated that above one half of our male membership are in the army of the Confederate States. Of course large and repeated drafts have necessarily been made upon the liberality of the people, to raise the funds to equip so large an armament in so brief a period of time, and the great central idea that has possessed the soul of every true-hearted man, woman and child has been, how to meet the issue thus forced upon us, in a manner *becoming* a people *worthy to be free*. It will not then be thought strange that your Board have felt called upon by the exigencies of the times to use more than ordinary caution in reference to expenditures, and to contract the sphere of their operations within a smaller compass than would have been proper under ordinary circumstances, that they might avoid incurring obligations greater than the diminished revenue of the Association would liquidate. They have studiously refrained from contracting any debts beyond the means placed at their disposal to pay, that they might not come up to the Associations with a debt hanging over them, for a few liberal hearted delegates to pay.

At a meeting of the Board held on the 8th of October, 1860, at the Baptist Female Institute, it was decided to continue Bro. Verser in the field for the present, and appoint others during the year as circumstances might justify. Before the close of his first quarter our political *status* became changed, and affairs assumed a gloomy aspect. Bro. Verser, in his report in December last, addressed the Board with reference to whether he should continue to labor as our Missionary longer than that quarter. They replied that they desired his services, but prospects for raising funds were growing less encouraging every day. That if he, as agent, could raise the funds adequate to his support, they wished him to continue throughout the year, or such portions of it as the amount he could raise would remunerate him for. Accordingly he has continued in the field. Bro. Verser has had a wide and laborious field of duty. He reports that in a district forty miles square, there is not an ordained Minister of our denomination, except Rev. Enoch Windes, who recently has not been engaged in preaching—and himself. He also states that many of the Churches to whom he has ministered have been entirely dependent upon the labor of your Missionary for the preaching of the word.

During the Summer, the Board decided to appoint Brethren W. W. Wilhite and L. P. Craig, to ride as Missionaries two months before the meeting of the Association, and on the 2nd day of July they addressed a letter to each of the Churches requesting their cooperation, and asking them to send up pledges for the amounts each Church could raise by the time of our present meeting; that if possible, other Missionaries might be employed to labor in the destitute places within our bounds.

To this letter, the following Churches responded: Bro. D. F. Gregory, on the part of Pleasant Hill Church, sent up a pledge for \$11 50; Bro. James Johnson, Clerk of Bear Creek Church, sent up information that his Church had not yet raised a subscription, but would raise as much as they could before the Association; Bro. Amos Jarman, for Mt. Pleasant Church, sent up a pledge of \$50; and Bro. Ed. Wise, for Mt. Pisgah Church, \$30. Thus these three Churches sent up pledges for \$91 50,—the only ones out of the whole thirty-eight, who gave any promise of assistance. Bro. Wilhite accepted the appointment tendered to him and entered at once upon his labors. Bro. Craig was only prevented from doing the same by severe protracted illness, from which he is not yet fully recovered. Your Missionaries who have been in the field report 430 miles traveled, 214 sermons preached, 12 protracted meetings, attended with 124 conversions. Thus even in the midst of civil tumult and disaster, hath the Lord blessed the efforts used to send forth the heralds of the cross. Brethren, should not this furnish us encouragement in our future exertions? We believe that truth is destined to triumph, and that its triumph is to be achieved by the agency of man. All Christians agree that Christianity is destined to flourish in a hitherto unprecedented manner; and an examination of its nature will evince an adaptation to Universality, not found in any other system of religion, true or false;—a tendency to self extension until it fills the whole earth, and an equal fitness to all nations, to all times, and to all conditions. The charter of the Christian Church contains the explicit injunction of its founder to its accredited Ministers and Membership, to publish the Gospel to every creature. The few and inadequate means which have already been employed, have been successful in gathering in only the *first fruits* of a future harvest. But the Church has been awaking to action. She has begun to feel the moral dignity and grandeur of the Missionary enterprise. And though a check may be given to this progress, by the unnatural conflict which is convulsing the New World like the out-bursting of Volcanic fires, still let us hope that she will speedily arise, panoplied with truth, "put on her beautiful garments," and enter more vigorously than ever upon her great work of evangelizing the world. And let us gain encouragement from the assurance that "in due time we shall reap if we faint not."

All of which is respectfully submitted,

Z. F. FREEMAN, Sec'y.

CHARLES GIBSON, President.

The Missionary arrangements of last year were adopted for this year, and the same Executive Board was appointed by the Moderator.

The following resolution was offered and unanimously adopted:

solved, That we tender our thanks to the brethren and ends of Russel's Valley Church and vicinity, for their kind and hospitable treatment to us since we have been with them. The Clerk was instructed to have 1000 copies of the Minutes published, and to superintend the printing.

The following brethren were appointed to distribute the Minutes:

1st District, M. Finny; 2nd District, J. Shackelford; 3d District, J. Herring.

It was moved and carried, that each delegate interest himself immediately on his return home, to raise pledges for Domestic Missions, and report to the Executive Board.

The Clerk was instructed to write the corresponding letter to other Associations, to be published in the Minutes.

Bro. J. N. Owen was elected Treasurer of the Association.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

The Report of the Treasurer was received and adopted as follows:

J. N. Owen, Treasurer, in account with Muscle Shoals Association,
To Balance on hand at close of 1860.....\$85 95

Cr.

Amount paid for Minutes..... 61 60

\$24 35

October 4, 1861. Interest on F. Cowan's bequest. 20 00

Balance on hand.....\$44 35

All of which is respectfully submitted,

J. N. OWEN, Treasurer.

REPORT OF FINANCIAL COMMITTEE.

The Financial Committee made their report which was received and adopted, with the understanding that they were allowed to make such additions as might be necessary and arrange the same with the Clerk.

Balance in the hands of Treasurer..... \$44 35

Received from Decatur Church..... 9 00

" " Town Creek Church..... 11 25

" " Pleasant Hill Church..... 10 35

" " Hopewell Church..... 68 05

" " Tuscumbia Church..... 2 00

" " Mt. Pleasant Church..... 47 00

" " Courtland Church..... 34 25

" " Shoal Creek Church..... 14 00

" " Mt. Pisgah Church..... 45 00

" " Mt. Zion Church..... 3 50

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|---|---|-----------------------------------|----|-----|
| " | " | Salem Church (in Morgan)..... | 12 | be- |
| " | " | Moulton Church..... | 6 | of |
| " | " | Enon Church..... | 10 | 00 |
| " | " | Bro. J. M. Kirk..... | 5 | 00 |
| " | " | " Edmond Ellet..... | 5 | 00 |
| " | " | " Verser (Book fund)..... | 9 | 00 |
| " | " | Public collection on Sabbath..... | 10 | 30 |

Amount of Missionary funds received.....\$345 05

Cr.

By Amount paid Bro. Verser.....\$ 99 50
 " " Treasurer..... 201 20
 " Balance in his hands for last year..... 44 35

Total amount of Missionary funds for 1861...\$345 05

Amount received as Minute fund.....\$55 80

Cr.

By amount of Minute fund paid Treasurer.....\$55 80

AMOUNT OF PLEDGES, UNPAID.

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| Bethlehem Church (Morgan)..... | \$ 57 00 |
| Mt. Zion Church..... | 3 30 |
| Shoal Creek Church..... | 23 00 |
| Mt. Tabor Church..... | 24 00 |
| Shilo Church..... | 1 00 |
| Concord Church..... | 7 50 |

Total unpaid pledges.....\$115 80

All of which is respectfully submitted.

C. GIBSON, Chairman.

Committee on Devotional Exercises reported the following as the order of exercises for the Sabbath:

Rev. J. Shackelford to preach at 10 A. M., Rev. J. Gunn at 11½, and Rev. W. R. Alexander at 2½ P. M.

On motion the Association adjourned to meet on the Sabbath at intermission, to finish what little business might be on hand and extend the parting hand.

Sabbath evening at intermission.

The Association met pursuant to adjournment.

Prayer by Bro. C. Gibson.

The Committee appointed at the last Association to revise the Constitution, Rules of Decorum and Articles of faith of the Association, reported that in their opinion, there was no necessity for revision. Report received and Committee discharged.

REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY.

The Committee on the State of the Country, made the fol-

wing report, which was received and unanimously adopted, and the Clerk instructed to have the same published in the Minutes and in such papers as he may think proper:

Your Committee on the State of the Country, ask leave to report that,

WHEREAS, Our country is engaged in a most unrighteous war, waged against us by those who were once our brethren, to accomplish a wicked and unholy purpose, and,

WHEREAS, We of the Confederate States believe it to be the duty and right of a free people to defend, to the best of their ability their homes, their lives, and their civil and religious liberties when imperiled. And believing it to be the duty of a Christian people to throw the weight of their influence upon the side of their country, when contending for those rights and institutions guaranteed to them by their Constitution, and in accordance with the teachings of the Word of God, and,

WHEREAS, Baptists have ever stood forth as the defenders of civil and Religious liberty, therefore, *

Be it Resolved, That, we, the members of this Association, as patriots and Christians, believe that it is our duty, Morally, Mentally and Physically, to assist our Government in bringing this unrighteous war to a successful and speedy termination.

Resolved further, That it is the duty of all the people of the Confederate States, to be united in this great contest, so that, when the war is over, we may be as a band of brothers, united by a common interest, and having a consciousness, that we have all done our duty before God and man in accomplishing our second independence.

Be it further Resolved, That we suggest to our brethren the importance of maintaining the Spirit of Christ and the character of Christians in this terrible conflict, and of earnestly engaging in prayer to Almighty God, for his guidance and protection in this our day of trial.

All fo which is respectfully submitted,

JOS. SHACKELFORD, Chairman.

The morning of the Sabbath opened with rain, which continued until 10 o'clock. The consequences were, there was not as large a congregation as there otherwise would have been; and services did not commence until a late hour. Bro. Shackelford occupied the stand in the morning and Bro. Alexander in the evening.

We trust that the word spoken may bring forth fruit to the glory and honor of God.

The business of the Association being finished, on motion, it adjourned, to meet with the Hopewell Church, on Friday before the 1st Sabbath in October, 1862. After singing a parting hymn and extending a parting hand by the delegates, prayer was made by Bro. Verser and benediction by the Moderator.

Thus another Associational year has gone into the returnly ^{be-}
 past! May the Lord bless the labors of His servants and make ^{of}
 us more profitable for the future.

J. SHACKELFORD, Clerk.

J. GUNN, Moderator.

LETTER OF CORRESPONDENCE.

The Muscle Shoals Baptist Association, sendeth Christian salutation to those bodies with whom she corresponds. Dear Brethren, we send you by the hands of our delegates, a package of Minutes, in which you will see what we have been doing for the last year.

We are truly sorry that we have so little that is cheering to the Christian heart to communicate. The cruel war that is waged upon us, seems to have paralyzed all Christian effort. We pray that God may remove the evil from us and that His cause may once more flourish in our midst. Our next Association will be held with the Hopewell Church, Morgan county, near Danville, commencing on Friday before the first Sabbath in October, 1862. Hoping that you will meet with us by your delegates.

We remain fraternally yours,

JOS. SHACKELFORD, Clerk.